

**Claims**

1. A method for performing a switching operation in a network element of a telecommunication network, said method comprising the steps of:
- a) generating a side information and a service information based on a received call, said side information indicating an incoming and/or outgoing side of said switching operation in said network element, and said service information indicating a switching service requested by said received call;
  - b) converting said side information and said service information into a switching technology independent identification information for identifying a start point and an end point of a connection to be switched at said incoming and/or outgoing side; and
  - c) controlling said switching operation based on said identification operation.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said incoming and/or outgoing sides are reserved separately, and connected to each other when a corresponding through connection is requested.
3. A method according to claim 1, wherein said switching service comprises at least one of a tone generation, a push button receiving function, an announcement, and a multi party conference call.
4. A method according to claim 1, wherein said converting step is performed in a distributed manner in a connection control procedure, a virtual path connection procedure, and a virtual channel connection procedure.

5. A method according to claim 1, wherein said converting step is implemented as a process family having a hand process for each call, wherein one hand process takes care of resources of a corresponding call.

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6. A method according to claim 5, wherein a hand refreshing service is provided for refreshing and supervising hand processes needed in one call.

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7. A method according to claim 1, wherein said incoming side is connected to said outgoing side with a through connection, when a speech or data signal can be transmitted.

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8. A method according to claim 1, wherein said incoming side is connected to said outgoing side via the end point of said incoming side.

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9. A method according to claim 1, wherein a state information is allocated to said incoming side and/or said outgoing side, said state information indicating whether a resource of a respective side can be connected to the other side.

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10. A method according to claim 1, wherein said identification information includes details of physical connections related to services which are to be switched.

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11. A method according to claim 1, wherein several start points are combined with a single end point, if the service information indicates a service combining respective branches.

12. A switching apparatus for performing a switching operation in a telecommunication network, said apparatus comprising:

- 5 a) call resource managing means (2) for generating a side information and a service information based on a received call, said side information indicating an incoming and/or outgoing side of said switching operation within said switching apparatus, and said service information indicating a switching a service requested by said received
- 10 call;
- b) logical resource managing means (3) for converting said side information and said service information into a switching technology independent identification information for identifying a start point and an end point of a
- 15 connection to be switched at said incoming and/or outgoing side; and
- c) switching control means (6) for controlling said switching operation based on said identification information.

20 13. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said call resource management means (2) is arranged to perform a call identification, a resource request and/or release, a connection and/or disconnection of calls for applications.

25 14. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said call resource managing means (2) is arranged to keep track of connections at said incoming and/or outgoing side.

30 15. An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein an identification number is allocated to each connection by said call resource managing means (2).

16. An apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising  
logical service managing means (4) arranged for determining  
switching connections based on said identification  
information and for supplying a corresponding switching  
5 information to said switching control means (6).